

1 **REMARKS:**

2 In the Final Office Action, the Examiner notes that claims 9-14, 16, 18, and 20-28 are
3 pending in the application, that claims 9-12 are rejected, claims 20 through 28 are allowed, and
4 that claims 13, 14 and 18 are objected to. The Examiner notes that claims 13, 14 and 18 would be
allowable if rewritten in independent form.

5 The present amendment incorporates the limitations of claim 18 into claim 9 and cancels
6 claim 18. Dependent claims 10-14 and 16 incorporate the limitations of claim 9 as currently
amended.

7 **I.**

8 **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103**

9 **A. Claims 9-12 and 16 - Summary of Examiner's Grounds for Rejection**

10 The Examiner rejected claims 9 through 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being
11 unpatentable over Wollar et al., because it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill
12 in the art to have provided Wollar et al with six flat sides (instead of four) on the upper expanding
portion of the fastener.

13 **B. Applicants' Reply to Examiner's Rejections**

14 Applicant has amended claim 9 to incorporate the limitations of Claim 18. The Examiner
15 has stated that claim 18, which depends only upon claim 9, would be allowable if rewritten in
16 independent form. Claims 10 through 14, and 16 are dependent on the amended base claim and
17 incorporate the limitations added therein. Claim 18, which limited the original claim 9 by phasing
the splits 120 degrees apart, has been rendered redundant by the amendment to claim 9 and is
therefore canceled.

18 Claims 20 through 28 have been allowed by the Examiner and are left in their original
19 form.

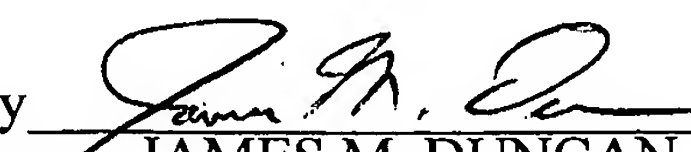
20 **IV**

Conclusion

21 Applicant respectfully submits that this submission is fully responsive to the August 17,
22 2004 Office Action, and these claims are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a Notice of
23 Allowance at an early date is therefore requested.

24 If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this
application, please telephone the undersigned at (661)395-1000.

25 Respectfully submitted,

26 By 
27 JAMES M. DUNCAN
Reg. No. 44,664